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the book at random, till one happens to strike the title *Zehnte Vorlesung* on p. 123. Why the reader should be exposed to these indignities, only a German publisher could explain. A useful bibliography (pp. 215-222) is not mentioned in the table of contents.

W. ASHER

The Dweller on the Threshold, by ROBERT HICHENS. New York, The Century Co. 1911. pp. 273. Price \$1.10 net.

It is seldom that a psychologist is called upon to review the Latest Novel. The present reviewer has read and enjoyed other works by Mr. Hichens,—*The Garden of Allah*, and *Bella Donna*; this newer work he has read without enjoyment.

The story has to do principally with the Rector of a London parish and his senior curate. At the beginning of their relationship, before the narrative opens, these men stand in sharp contrast: the Rector is talented, ambitious, self-confident, the Curate is industrious, dutiful, humble-minded. On the other hand, the Rector is troubled by sceptical doubts, and is betrayed by grossness of fibre into occasional lapses from right-doing, while the Curate, amiable and easily led as he is, has at any rate the strength that comes from an unshaken faith and personal purity of living. The Rector now conceives the idea of using the Curate as a medium whereby he may obtain communications from the spirit world; he thus satisfies his lust of power, and at the same time hopes to settle his religious doubts. The Curate, however, has to be inveigled into 'sitting'; and the Rector gains his point by the lying assurance that the whole object of the proceedings is to strengthen the Curate's will, to inspire him with something of the mental power that he admittedly lacks and that he admires in his superior. So the sittings begin. But the Rector fails after all, to 'entrance' his weaker-minded colleague,—who, on his side, feels himself strengthened in the manner promised. And so it presently comes to pass that the Curate is the dominant and strong-willed, the Rector the dominated and suggestible member of the duo; the parts have been reversed or exchanged. But here is the mysterious consequence: the Rector remains consciously what he was, the Rector, only that he is now a weakling, aware of his weakness and trending steadily down hill; the Curate, who has sucked the Rector's strength from him, becomes a dual personality, in whom the original Rector predominates and the Curate is entirely subordinate. In other words, the Curate henceforth is the 'double' of the Rector, knows and feels himself to be in the main identical with the Rector, while his own curate's nature remains largely in abeyance, though it is not wholly lost; he therefore watches the Rector, fears on his behalf, suffers with and for him, seeks to guide or direct him, precisely as a man would act and suffer in his own interest; and the Rector, harassed by this perpetual scrutiny, this ever-present influence to which he must yield while he fails to understand it, breaks down with a completeness that ends in death. The Curate, as the watchful and critical double, is thus—as one may suppose—the 'dweller' on the Rector's 'threshold.' The Rector's death dissolves the bond between the two men; the Curate reverts at once to his original, sequential state; sincerely mourns the loss of his hero; has no memory of the insight into the Rector's character and motives that he gained from the sittings; and loses, once and for all, the foreign personality that had well nigh ousted his proper nature.

That is the story. The remaining persons of the drama are a Professor who, in the quest of scientific fact, devotes himself to psychical research, and whose watchwords seem, hitherto, to have been telepathy and nervous dyspepsia; a Gentleman of Independent Means, who is somewhat more human than the Professor, but shows a like devotion, and has worked under the Professor's direction; and the Rector's Wife, a lady whose fate it is to worship at the shrine of masculine success, and who therefore, after an interlude of keen dislike of the Curate, definitely transfers her admiration

from her broken husband to his masterful coadjutor. The Professor is wont to refer to this lady as the Link, though her connective office is not clear; the confessions of the Rector to the Independent Gentleman, and of the Curate to the Professor, make the story plain enough without her.

More interesting than the novel itself is the psychology of its author. Why did he write it? To point the moral that, if we could but see ourselves with a perfect vision, we should be horrified at the revelation? But that is trite morality; and most readers, it may be assumed, will compare themselves favorably with the Reverend Marcus Harding. To plead the cause of psychical research, on the ground that there are more things in heaven and earth than science dreams of? But an imaginative tale will not convince any who are not convinced already. As a *tour de force*, to prove that the modern novelist can make plausible use of the 'supernatural'? Perhaps: the title seems to point to some such intention. But then—plausibility is a relative matter, and the book should not be sent for review to a psychologist.

WM. ERSKINE

The Evolution of Mind. By JOSEPH McCABE. London, A. & C. Black. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1910. pp. xvii., 287.

In this fluently—at times brilliantly—written essay, Mr. McCabe seeks to solve the cosmic problem of the birth and development of mind. It is usual, he tells us, to postulate two evolutionary series: the material, where "all varieties of energy and matter arise out of the abysmal womb of ether," and the mental, which "set in when the earth reached a certain stage of its development." Is this dualism tenable? When, and in what form, did consciousness first appear? Can mind be brought into the cosmic unity by tracing its gradual emergence from the etheric matrix? These are the questions which the present work essays to answer.

All living matter, whether plant or animal, shows, when it has freedom of movement, two properties which we may, if we will, term 'mental' or 'psychical': namely, sensitiveness or irritability or responsiveness to stimulation, and spontaneous or self-initiated movement. But sensitiveness is also a widespread attribute of inorganic matter; and spontaneous movement always turns out, on careful scrutiny, to be a response to environmental stimuli. Here, therefore, is no evidence of consciousness; if we speak of 'mind' at all, we are stripping the word of the distinctive significance that it has in our own experience. What we are looking for is proof of consciousness.

But what, then, the reader may ask, *is* consciousness? "I make no attempt to define consciousness," replies our author, "partly because it defines itself more clearly than words can do, partly because all attempts to define it have proved abortive." Nevertheless, he knows very well what he is in search of. "The question to be answered is not, can we find any actions in a lower animal which are consistent with a theory of consciousness, but can we find any which are inconsistent with a purely neural action. The question of consciousness does not arise till then." "What I am chiefly seeking to determine is whether a new reality, or agency, besides ether, intervenes at some point in the earth's story." "The plain purpose I have in view is to see whether, and when, a new reality, other than ether and its products or aspects, enters into the tissue of our planetary life." And so he works up the scale of organic evolution, and reaches one negative conclusion after another. "There is no proof that consciousness had appeared before the Devonian period, or has since developed in any of the modern representatives of Pre-Devonian animals." "We have no clear or cogent indication of conscious states in the whole invertebrate world, or in any type of animal that lived before the Permian revolution in the earth's history." "We have not found a single pre-Tertiary animal whose activities cannot be explained without an assump-